

also heavily involved in the church, singing in the sanctuary choir, teaching Sunday and vacation bible schools and working with the youth department.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the late Mrs. Bernice Cleveland. Her altruistic nature and selfless dedication warrant this laudable recognition. For her unyielding efforts to help others, Mrs. Cleveland leaves this world a better place.

GUARDIANS OF FREEDOM ACT OF 2011

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2011

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise on behalf of all of West Virginia's National Guard and proudly introduce the Guardians of Freedom Act of 2011—a bill to elevate the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to a position on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The National Guard is one of our Nation's longest standing institutions, empowered by Congress and providing to the States a highly trained and well equipped force to protect life and property.

Over the course of its nearly four hundred year history, the National Guard has remained a dual State-Federal force, providing security on the home front and fighting threats to our Nation and our freedoms all over the globe.

Our National Guardsmen are true American patriots. Theirs is a proud story of tradition, service, sacrifice, and uncommon acts of heroism. They make each of us so very proud.

Aristotle said, "Men acquire a particular quality by constantly acting a particular way . . . you become just, by performing just actions . . . brave by performing brave actions."

The American people owe an enormous debt of gratitude to our nearly 500,000 men and women members of the National Guard in service to these great United States. These extraordinary individuals maintain the Guard's multi-mission role—providing nearly 33 percent of America's combat power globally. Yet, simultaneously and with great skill, from approximately 3,400 community-based armories they serve their fellow citizens in defense of our homeland, and in support to States and local civil authorities and emergency response needs.

West Virginians volunteer for the National Guard at nearly double the national rate. The West Virginia National Guard has 38 units and activities stationed in 22 counties throughout West Virginia, and currently has units deployed in military operations around the world.

Mr. Speaker, for 35 years I have been privileged to represent the people of southern West Virginia, and it is with humble sincerity I say, our West Virginia National Guard is a model example of a commitment to excellence, and professional dedication to America's defense.

From the home front to the front lines, we call upon our National Guard to fulfill missions of public safety and security on and between our borders here at home, and send them to foreign lands to combat terrorism abroad. They are among the first called to aid in a domestic disaster and have oftentimes been the last to leave a battlefield.

This year the National Guard will mark its 375th birthday. Formed as colonial militias, the new colonies in North America depended upon the Guard to protect fellow citizens from Indian attack, foreign invaders, and later to help achieve our independence. Recognizing the militia's role for the newly formed United States, the Framers of the Constitution empowered Congress to provide for training and equipping the militias.

Since the Guard's founding and through an historic journey of "call outs" and stand out missions—from the bayou communities ravaged by Hurricane Katrina to the frontiers of freedom during the Cold War—our National Guard has seen its Federal mission change.

Our National Guard has a duty and commitment to the citizens and communities of the States in which these soldiers call "family" and "home." It is a military service tradition that has been challenged by long-term and multiple deployments to front lines in two active theaters, and in support of missions in all corners of the globe as directed by our Nation's Commander in Chief.

Therefore, it is not only our duty, it is an absolute necessity, that Congress take action to elevate the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to a position on the Joint Chiefs of Staff to serve as an advocate and liaison for the National Guard of each State to inform of all actions that could affect their Federal or State missions.

In a nation such as ours, it is a stunning reality that today we ask our brothers and sisters, husbands, and wives to serve around the globe to preserve democracy and promote freedom. But in our country, where every voice counts, our Nation's active duty leadership excludes the voice of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Congress must ensure the National Guard has appropriate input during the planning and budgetary process within the Department of Defense, and end the challenge to live with "after-the-fact" process, as is now the case.

As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau would have responsibility and authority to advocate and coordinate the Guard's warfighting support and force provider mission with its homeland security and support missions to ensure the Guard has the resources to perform its multiple missions and fulfill its Constitutional role to our States.

Mr. Speaker, from the battlefield to the home fields, our National Guard—America's patriots—exemplifies sacrifice and commitment to duty.

Now more than ever, this Nation is relying upon the Guard to wage combat on foreign soil, straining our resources here on the home front to respond to domestic disasters and the Guard's traditional duties. The training, equipping, and deployment of the Guard, and their budget, ought to be matters decided with input from the National Guard Chief at the highest levels of the military echelon. Now more than ever, the Guard needs a seat at the head table.

I urge my colleagues to support the Guardians for Freedom Act of 2011. We have a responsibility to respectfully and gratefully fulfill our duty to support the original intent of our Constitution for each State to maintain an organized militia with integrity, and effectively support and acknowledge the great sacrifice so many willingly make for all of us.

HONORING PRESIDENT RONALD WILSON REAGAN

SPEECH OF

HON. MARY BONO MACK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 9, 2011

Mrs. BONO MACK. Mr. Speaker I rise today to celebrate the life of President Ronald Reagan.

This week, the nation remembers the late President Ronald Reagan as a remarkable President, beloved entertainer and, most importantly, a great American. President Reagan saw America as a beacon of hope and freedom. His strong leadership guided our nation through a challenging and difficult chapter in America's history. He helped restore the hope that inspired the people to once again believe in themselves and carry on to achieve what was once thought the unachievable.

One of my greatest thrills was welcoming President Reagan to our desert community when I served as First Lady of Palm Springs. Considered one of the nation's best Presidents, I saw firsthand his love of country and his ability to connect with people.

Revered for his leadership and tenacity, Ronald Reagan relentlessly fought for freedom throughout the world. A man of humble origins, he became an iconic symbol for democracy and the American way of life as President of the United States.

I am thankful for President Reagan's service to our nation and what he gave this country as an entertainer and as a public servant. I extend my personal appreciation to First Lady Nancy Reagan who supported her husband so steadfastly in his work and carries on his legacy today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to honor this great American.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PRIVATE FIRST CLASS ZACHARY SALMON

HON. GEOFF DAVIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2011

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on January 12, 2011, Private First Class Zachary Salmon died from his injuries after sustaining small arms fire in Kunar Province, Afghanistan.

Salmon enlisted in the Army in March 2010 and was assigned to the 32nd Cavalry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

A devoted family member and father, Salmon grew up in Harrison, Ohio. He was a 2008 graduate of Pigeon Forge High School in Tennessee and most recently lived in Hebron, Kentucky before joining the Army.

His awards and decorations include the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Medal, the Army Service Ribbon and the Combat Action Badge.

He leaves behind his three-year-old son Noah; his mother, Sonya Christian and stepfather, who live in Hebron; his father, Steven Salmon, of Hamilton, OH; a brother, Steven Salmon of Hamilton; and two sisters, Kelsi Salmon and Katrin Maurer.